

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

- 1-167. (Cancelled)
168. (New) A method for controlling the viscosity of a polymer-based tissue sealant or adhesive comprising the step of:
- partially cross-linking the polymer by adding a known mole percentage of a cross-linker to the polymer prior to applying the sealant or adhesive to the tissue, wherein the mole percentage is less than that which would cause complete cross-linking of the polymer.
169. (New) The method according to claim 168 wherein the cross-linked polymer is water soluble.
170. (New) The method according to claim 168 wherein the polymer comprises a protein.
171. (New) The method according to claim 170 wherein the protein comprises albumin.
172. (New) The method according to claim 168 wherein the cross-linker comprises a protein cross-linker.
173. (New) The method according to claim 168 wherein the cross-linker comprises a zero-length cross-linker.
174. (New) The method according to claim 168 wherein the cross-linker comprises a carbodiimide.
175. (New) The method according to claim 174 wherein the carbodiimide comprises 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride.